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A
DISCOURSE
ON THE
LIBRARY
USE of the PEN.

CONTAINING

Observations on *WRITING* in General:

THE

Proper Posture in Sitting to *WRITE*:

Rules for choosing *QUILLS*, and making of *PENS*
for different Hands, (proving that the common
Methods of sitting to write, and nibbing the Pen,
obstruct the Freedom of Writing:)

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that *ART*.

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DISCOURSE, &c.



UIDO PANCIROLLUS, in his Account of *memorable Things lost*, expresses himself thus; —
“ The Invention of *Letters* is
“ much controverted by *Authors* ;
“ it is commonly supposed they were found
“ out by the *Phœnicians*, which *Lucan* intimates in his third Book, when he sings,
“ *Phœnicians that (if Fame we dare believe)*
“ *To human Speech first Characters did give.*”

Whether these *Characters* were written, or how wrote; if *engraven*, cut in *Wood*, &c. is not the *Business* of this *Discourse* to treat of. *Writing* and *Engraving* seem to be very *antient*, as we find in *Holy Writ*, *Job* xix. 23, 24.
“ *Oh that my Words were now written! Oh that*
“ *they were printed in a Book! That they were*
“ *graven with an Iron Pen and Lead, in the*
“ *Rock for ever!*”

Thus we see that *Writing*, *Engraving*, and *Printing*, are no new *Inventions*: How these

Arts were performed in *antient* Times, or their Difference with the *present*, is not relative to my *Design*; which is chiefly to point out the two great *Difficulties* that *obstruct* our present *Writers*, and lay down *Rules* for the Ease of the *Writer*, which will tend to the Freedom of *Writing*.

There is no *Art* of more *Use*, or in *Esteem*, than modern *Writing*.—No *Art* of more *Use*, because no *Commerce* or *Business* can be carried on without it. Its *Usefulness* to those concerned in the *Law*, to such as have any *Naval* or *Military* Employments, also to the *Physician* and *Divine*, together with the Reputation it hath with all Persons, render it altogether needless to make any *Encomiums* on its *Use*, should I be better *qualified* than I am. It is *esteemed* not only for its *Use*, but for its *Beauty*, excelling all other *Arts* when rightly performed: I say it *excells*, being executed with so small an Instrument as the *Pen*, and at one single *Operation*; for when *After-Touches* are made, that *Letter* so *assisted* is not *wrote*, but *drawn*, *painted* or *patch'd*, and that additional *Assistance* takes away the very Propriety of *Writing*. Therefore, when performed as it *ought*, I know no one *Art* of such an exact *Proportion*, such other excellent *Qualities*, as in *Writing*, (which makes it not only *valued* for its *Use*, but for its *Freedom* and *Beauty*) that is performed with but one *Tool* and at one *Motion*, except the valuable *Art* of *Writing*, — and therefore *commands* *Esteem*. The

The two great *Difficulties* that *obstruct* the Freedom of *Writing* are, the *Position* of your *Body* in *Sitting*, and laying your *Book* or *Paper* before you; the other, making or *nibbing* your *Pen*. In this *Discourse* I shall not only point out the *Errors* the common and much-approved *Methods* are liable to, but shall lay down such other *Rules* for the more easy *Writing* a free Hand, as I daily *practise*, and am convinced of the Certainty by *Experience*. I would not have any *imagine* that I endeavour to *instruct* such as know little or nothing of *Writing*; my principal and main *View* is to remove those *Difficulties* and *Discouragements* out of the Way of such as have been *striving* and *endeavouring* in the *Dark*, either thro' wrong *Instructions*, false *Ideas*, or erroneous *Practice*. Nothing is more *true* than that there are many Persons who would be *thought*, and by many are esteemed good *Writers*, yet are so *perplexed* at making their *Pens*, that they are *obliged* to the Assistance of common *Pen-cutters*, few of whom, if any, know how to *write*, and therefore it is simply *impossible* they should be capable of making good *Pens* with *Certainty*.

In order to make a good *Pen*, you must provide a good *Knife*; or if you have two, one for the *shaping*, the other for *nibbing*, you will find the *Benefit*. I find that the Blade, if *strong* and *large*, takes off the *Nib* the *cleaner*, the *Weight* of the *Blade* requiring less

less *Pressure*: The *Edge* also ought to be *strait*, and not too *keen*; the round-pointed *Blades* hinder *nibbing* the *Pen square*, and if too *keen*, when *nibbing* a strong *Pen*, the *Edge* is apt to turn.

The next Thing is the Choice of *Quills*, and of these there are from *several Counties* great *Quantities* brought to L O N D O N, as from *Yorkshire, Shropshire, Lincolnshire, &c.* the former of which are the *best*, by reason of their *Clearness* and *Strength*. To make these natural *Quills* of more *Use*, there are two *Ways* of *manufacturing* them, call'd *dutching* and *clarifying*; the first is done by the Help of *Fire*; the other by *boiling* them in *Water*; and then *clearing* them over a *Charcoal Fire*, or putting them into *hot Sand*. Here it may not be amiss to remove a *Mistake* some good *Writers* labour under, who think these *Pens* are boiled in *Oil*; whereas, if they were boiled in *Oil*, the *Ink* could never flow from them: On the other *Hand*, this Method of *clarifying* them is to take out that *Oily Matter* that is natural to raw *Quills*, which causes a *spungy Nib* after very little *Writing*. These *Quills* so *manufactured* are of longer *Duration* than *raw Quills*, and useful to such who dispatch *Business*: They have also a better *Look*; but are, nevertheless, not so *necessary* for *Writing-Schools* as a natural *Quill*, after it is of some *Age*, and kept very dry, so that the *Oily Matter* before spoken of is *dried away*, it having

having not that *Brittleness*, as when it is *dutch'd* or *clarify'd* (especially if so *manufactured* by an *unskilful* Person) therefore more fit to write set *Lines*, and indeed, if not *scraped* too much over the *Slit*, is much easier to make. But this is what may be called a Branch of other People's *Business*; so I shall not here trouble my *Reader* with their *Secrets*, this being *sufficient* to my *Purpose*.

I observed before, I did not write for *those* who were totally unacquainted with *Writing*; so I shall avoid *directing* how to hold the *Quill*, the *Knife*, and the like, for I conclude such for whom I *write* have been *taught* that already. Neither shall I, when I come to treat of *Writing*, concern myself about the *Slope* of the *Desk*, how to fit to the *Light*, &c. thinking those *Directions* entirely *useless* and *unnecessary*; tho' I am very sure, the *Master* who writes upon a flat *Table* has the Advantage of him who writes upon an extraordinary *slope Desk*, because the *Ink* is apt to RECOIL; consequently, if the *Flowing* of the *Ink* is thereby *impeded*, the Freedom and Beauty of the *Letter*, or Command of Hand, is very much *hindered*, nor will it appear with its proper *Sprightliness* as it should.

Thus being provided with *Knife*, *Quills*, and *Writing Table* or *Desk*, your *Paper* and *Ink* being such as you may write on; the one being neither too *coarse* nor of too *stiff* a Nature;

ture; the other, that you may *write* with, and that with *Pleasure*, which is very difficult, if the *Ink* be too thin, or of too *gummy* a Nature: If made with *Ink-Powder*, it is *apt* sometimes not to *mix* well with the *Water*, for want of some other *Ingredient* to *cement* them, as it were. *Ink* thus made is very often *sandy*, which getting into the *Nib*, not only spoils the *Pen*, but the *Writing* looks of divers *Colours*, and the leading *Strokes* *coarse*. These are Things, tho' something *relative* to this *Discourse*, I shall not enlarge upon, for the *Reason* before-mentioned — supposing my Reader a *Writer*; neither shall I trouble *him* with my Thoughts of *Writing* in particular, or in its several *Branches*, whether in the *Writing-Schools*, *Business*, or the *Law*, but only speak to *Writing* in *general*, — that being *necessary* before I treat of the two *principal* Parts of my Design, viz. *Sitting to write*, and *making the Pen*.





O F

W R I T I N G

In General.

THE Art of *Writing* is a *Representation* of our *Words*. To obtain *Perfection* in that *Art*, the *HEAD* must be fully *informed* of what the *Hand* ought to do; not *informed* with *vain* and *trifling Fancies* and *straggling Strokes*, which are *used* by some as though they were of *Ornament*, but of a just *Proportion* of the *Characters*; and this *Information* is *acquired* by getting an exact *Idea* of the *Hand* you intend to be *Master* of. In few *Words*, *Writing* is performed at once, with one *Operation* of the *PEN*.

The *Writer* who endeavours to mend his *Writing* by *patching* or *filling up*, *adding Strength*, or any other *Assistance*, forfeits his *Character* as a *Writer*, and may be more *justly*, and with greater *Propriety*, called a *Letter-Dauber*. I am not against *Writing* having its *just* and proper *Embellishments*, but this ought to be more *carefully* and *judiciously*

B done,

done, and *requires* no little *Study* and *Application* to dispose it *right*. In such a trifling *Assistance* as placing a *Dot* at the *Tail* or *Head* of any *open Letter*, some have done it so *clumsily* that it has even *spoiled* the *Beauty* of the *Letter*; instead of *mending*, they have *marred* that which was *good* without *Assistance*.

To *write* well, is to write *correctly*: It matters not what *Slope* the *Writing* is of, how wide, or how narrow, so that it be all alike. Should you write a *Line* after the same *Mode* as was in *vogue* 40 or 50 Years ago, if the *Writer* so designed, he shews himself a *Master* of the *Art*; and indeed I must acknowledge, I think that *Writing* which is the most *legible* the *best*: The *Design* of *Writing* is to convey your *Ideas*, therefore the plainer the *Character*, the more it is likely to strike the *Eye*, and consequently sooner make a proper *Impression*. In a late *Performance*, called the UNIVERSAL PENMAN, there is a Number of *Writing-Masters* who have *endeavoured* to make the *Art* as *excellent* in that *Way* as is possible; and tho' some of those *Masters* had establish'd *Characters*, either by being known to the *World* by their *Performances*, or by *serving* a kind of *Apprenticeship* to those who had already made themselves known either by *publishing* or *teaching*; yet the *Engraver* of that *able Performance* is not *insensible* that there are some *Pieces* from others (till then *obscure Persons*) that have nothing more

more to *recommend* them than that they are all of a *piece*, for the *Correctness* of the *Writing* is *sufficient* to speak its *Worth*, without the Assistance of *Ornament*, or *Command* of *Hand*.

To write a good *Line*, or a good *Piece* of *Writing*, supposing a four or a six *Line Piece*, you are *carefully* to have *Regard* that you *bold on* and *end* as you *begin*: This, and this *only*, is the *hardest* Part of *Writing* for the *Graver*; and I venture to *affirm* that *Writing*, for the *Engraver* to *execute* his *Art* in a *Workman-like* Manner, is the most *difficult* Part of *Writing* whatever. A *Man* who is an *excellent Engraver*, matters nothing *more* than a due *Proportion*; and a regular *Slope*, occasioned by that *Proportion*: I *mean* all those *Letters* depending on an *m* or *n* of an equal *Width*, the *Turns* as agreeable as is *possible* for the *Hand* to *perform*, which will cause the said *Proportion*; all the *Ovals*, and those *Letters* depending on an *Oval*, as nigh *alike* as you can; the *Tops* and *Bottoms* of a *Height* and *Length*: Therefore I say, if the *Writing* be *wide* or *narrow*, *up-right* or *slope*, more or less, the *Equality* of such *Writing* will *strike* the *Eye*, and have nothing to discommend it but the *Prejudice* and *ill Nature* of *such* who cannot *perform*, after so *just* a manner, and therefore are determined to *decry* it, and *substitute*, in the room of such *Writing*, their own *incorrect* Performances.

Equal *Width* and equal *Height* is the main *Business* of *Writing*, for an *Engraver* to engrave from; the *Beauty* of the *Turns*, by having a fine *leading* or *hair Stroke*, is sometimes *detrimental* to the taking off the *Writing* to the *Plate*, especially if they are not *proportionable*, and tho' not *seen* so *easy* with the *naked Eye*, yet after being engraved or printed, will shew their *Deformity*. I mention this, because I know those who have strove to write *neat* for the *Purpose* abovenamed, yet with *Care* and *Pains* could not write a single *Line* for that *Use*, tho' their *Writing*, to the *Eye* of indifferent *Judges*, would look very agreeable, — and this owing only to the *Want* of *Correctness*.

There are some very good *Writers* that spoil the *Beauty* of their *Labour* by an over Fondness for *Ornament*: After they have wrote a good *Piece*, or sometimes a single *Word*, will dress and smother it in *Flourishes*, When a *Piece* of *Writing* is thus bid, the *Design* of it is lost, by what they put for *Embellishment*, striking the *Eye* before the *Writing*. Such *Persons* as these, tho' they write well, and have a good *Command* of *Hand*, yet would they shew these separately, would find the *Benefit* of it. A good *Word* or *Piece* of *Writing* will command, as it were, the *Attention* of a *judicious Judge*, without *Assistance*. It is possible for the best-made
Man

Man in the World to be spoiled in his Shape, to outward Appearance, by the Help of his Taylor, &c. or for the finest Bird to be hid in a Bush. This has been the Case in dressing many a good Letter.

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Sitting to W R I T E, &c.

IT is surprizing that the common *Method* of sitting to *write* hath not been *alter'd* in the *Writing-Schools*, when it is well known that there are Numbers of *Persons* who have had a *Writing Education*, and yet as soon as they become somewhat weaned from their *School Instructions*, and are initiated into real *Business*, they fall, as it were, insensibly into what most *Teachers* call *Error*; and so soon as they have in *reality* fallen from their first *Instructions*, from *stiff*, *aukward* and *lame Writers*, they become exceeding good *Clerks*, write *free*, and dispatch *Business* with *Neatness* and *Correctness*. This I speak not upon *Trust*, but *experimentally*, and of my own *Knowledge*. Altho' what I shall lay down as a fundamental *Truth*, is an approv'd *Error*; and as I *freely* own I *differ* from most, if not *all*, the *Writing-Masters*, especially those who are called *REGULARLY BRED*, yet I differ upon good *Reasons*, *Practice* and *Experience*. I hope to make good my following *Method* to the *Satisfaction* of those

those who will *attentively* read and make
TRIAL.

I begin with *sitting* to *write*, before the
using or making the PEN, it being *necessary*
to know how to *sit*, as in the *Sequel* will ap-
pear.

Directions for Sitting, &c.

LET your Seat be so high as that you may
sit easy, without either your Legs hanging,
or throwing them from you: Your Desk or
Table about the Height of your Middle.—
Thus seated, lay your Book or Paper awry;
that is, instead of being straight before you, let
it incline towards your left Arm or Side;
the more it inclines, the more your Slope will
be. If you write upright, then lay your Book
or Paper even before you. Fix your Body
directly before your Desk or Table, with both
right and left Elbows on it, as the general
Method of Teaching is that your left Arm
should be.

Thus seated, and your Book, &c. before
you, you may write with all the Freedom
and Ease you desire: No nervous Flutter-
ings, Contractions, Numbness, and Stiffness,
that too frequently sitting with the left Side
towards the Desk, and leaning the Stress of
your

your *Body* upon your left *Arm* occasions, will attend you. The above *Method* will suit all *Sizes*, and both *Sexes*; the *Fat* and the *Lean*, the *Tall* or the *Short*, Men of bulky *Size*, and *Ladies* laced in their *Stays*, will all find this *Method* easy and practicable; they will write without *Fatigue*, with a great deal of *Freedom*: What is more, they will write even without *LEADING-STRINGS*, either *single* or *slope* Lines, or any other Assistance whatever.

This *Position* of the *Body*, I know, may seem a little strange at the first trying. I shall first let my *Reader* know, that I have been conversant in *Writing*, both at home and abroad, for more than twenty Years, and have seen as great a *Variety* of *Writing*, and as many different *Writers* (perhaps) as any Man of my *Age*: I have wrote, at *Times*, no one more; yet 'till within about seven Years, I always found a great deal of *Difficulty* in writing legible, free and correct; but at last falling into this *Method*, with what I shall mention concerning the nibbing of the *PEN*, I venture to affirm that I write with little or no *Fatigue* at all, as legible as ever, with more *Freedom*, equally correct, and with Ease, or very little Pain, dispatch Business for Hours together, and that by this *Method* I now offer to the *PUBLICK*. I assert this, not only to be believed barely upon my Credit,

Credit, but it is well known to many *Persons*: Some to whom I have communicated this *Method* are able and willing to testify the *Veracity* of this *Assertion*. Any *Person* that is grounded in the common *Practice* of *Writing*, and rivetted in *Opinion*, let him but TRY: If it should seem something *difficult* at first, all new *Things* are seemingly so, 'till made *easy* by *Use*: If he has been instructed in one *Form* or *Way* of *Writing*, he must be badly grounded, if, to try a new *Method*, he is afraid of putting his *Hand out*, as the *SCHOOL PHRASE* is.

All new *Inventions* require a particular *Explanation*: This I shall, in few Words, endeavour to *demonstrate*; supposing a *candid Reader* will not only *read*, but TRY, without the *Prejudices* of *Education*. Many has been the *Time* that I have seen *Persons* write in this *Posture* (and no doubt but others have) and I have asked them how they could write so, or rebuked them for it, telling them I was sure they were not taught so. If, in real *Business*, they have replied they could not write as they were taught, is not this a very surprizing *Answer*? And yet perhaps these very *Persons* write a better *Hand* for *Business* than the *MASTER* who taught them. The plain *Inconveniency* attending the common *Method* of sitting to write helps to illustrate my *RULE*; viz. There are very few but what find it difficult to write either *even*, or to keep a *Line* of an exact *Heighth*: The Reason of this is,

C

because

because as your *Body* inclines to the *left* towards your *Desk*, you *write* from you, which causes you to *fall* in the *Evenness*, if you *write* without *Lines*: If you *write* with them, unless you follow your *Writing*, it declines at the *End* of the *Line*, by *stretching* your *Hand*, and being from *directly* under your *EYE*. Should you move your *Body* after your *Writing* too far, your *Writing* will become larger at the *Close* of the *Line*.

The *Method* I have laid down, *remedies* these and all other *Inconveniencies* attending the common *POSTURE* in *Sitting*, and laying your *BOOK* or *PAPER*, to write; for you have no *Occasion* to *stir* your *Body*, but *sit* at *Ease*, as if *sitting* in an *Elbow Chair*; the *Fatigue* in *Writing* is lessen'd, by having both your *Arms* to ease you, laying an equal *Weight* on the *Table* or *Desk* to *support* your *BODY*; — the right *Hand* directing the *PEN* towards the *Corner* of the *Paper*, and tho' it *rises*, it *rises* so gradually, that when you come to *lay* your *Paper* strait, your *Writing* is as even as if perform'd with *Lines*. When you have *wrote* your *full* Length of the *Stretch* of your *Fingers*, your *left* *Hand* is *employed* in *drawing* the *Paper* towards your *BODY*, and *pushing* it from you when your *Line* is *finished*, to *begin* again.

The *Writers* of the *Law* *Hands* are only *excepted* (if any) from this *Method* of *Writing*, and they but in *Part*; which shews the *Certainty* of my *Method*. Their *Writing*,
especially

especially *Engrossing*, is quite *upright*; now they always sit *strait*, and *hold* their *Elbows* out, as I have described, their *Parchment* being *even* before *them*. This *POSITION* of *Body* and *Parchment* naturally causes *them* to draw the *PEN* *strait* towards their *Bodies*, and as the *Parchment* lies, obliges them to write *perpendicular*; — consequently, if the *Paper* or *Book* is laid *awry* or *uneven*, inclining towards your *left Side*, and drawing the *PEN* towards your *Body*, you have a *Slope* accordingly.

WRITING-MASTERS will find *Ease*, and acquire *Reputation*, by this way of *Teaching* to write, among the *FAIR SEX*, whose *Stays* and *Dress* are *troublesome* to *them*, if they sit inclining their *left Side* to the *Desk*. Youth designed for *Business* will write at *School* after the *Manner* many of them *insensibly* fall into when they have left *School* for *some Time*. I shall instance that *Engravers* sit in this *Position*, the *Plate* laying on their *Sand-Bag*, as I say the *Book* or *Paper* ought to lay, seldom having it *even*, but when they look at what they have performed. Indeed there is this *Difference* between *Writing* and *Engraving*; the one is performed by drawing your *PEN* towards your *Body*; the other, by pushing the *Graver* from you; and the *Engraver* holds his *Graver* in the *Palm* of his *Hand*, his *right Arm* somewhat more *erected*; yet, nevertheless, he goes over the same *Strokes* that the *PEN* has already performed, whether *upright* or *slope*; the

Position of his *Body* and the *Plate* the same as I have laid down for *Writing*: There is this *Agreement* between them, that *however* the *Instruments* or *Tools* held or used may differ, yet they both tend to the same *End*, and answer the same *Purpose*, by reason of the *Position* of the *Body*, &c.

I am sensible that this *Method* may be disadvantageous in placing Boys in common at School; they will be obliged to have much more *Room* in their *Forms*. To this I shall only answer, there are few new Things advanced, though calculated for general Good, but what meet with some particular *Exception*; and tho' this may be a seeming *Difficulty*, yet this *Method* of sitting to write, if it answers the *End* of writing free, the *Master* will find it worth his while to follow it. It is attended with an *Advantage* to such *WRITING-MASTERS* who are employed in *Teaching* abroad, where no such little *Difficulty* can arise. Men of *Business*, whether in large or small Concerns, will quickly find the Benefit of it in the easy *Dispatch* of *Business*, which must be allowed is the principal Design of *Writing* in general. These few Observations are enough on the common Way of sitting to write, and the Attempt I have made to demonstrate my *Method* to be plain, easy, and intelligible to a moderate *Capacity*. I doubt not but they will find a favourable *Acceptance*, if I may be allowed to assert, that I know as
good

good Clerks as any in London that write after this Method, with Success and to Satisfaction; which will corroborate what I have here advanced.

If it should be objected against by Geometrical Letter-Makers, or by the most eminent WRITING-MASTERS, I am constrained to say, that their Objections are a Proof of the Certainty of the Method. I have already observed it matters not what Slope Writing is of, whether 58 or 60 Degrees; no one can write either Slope with Certainty without Lines, and then he is not only fatigued with making his Letters of an equal Distance and Width, but he is cramped and perplexed to keep a Consistency with his Geometrical Lines, which in some measure hinders the Freedom, and altogether spoils the Beauty of Writing. And for those who would take upon them to be the most eminent of the Profession of Writing-Masters, I can but to them say, I presume they will not take from me the Character of a WRITER, then consequently I am a sort of a Judge; and therefore I have freely deliver'd my Opinion of the Matter: Observing further, that I think that as there are few Writing-Masters who follow this common Method that have arrived to be much superior to myself, I believe the Reason is, because the general Method of Instructing is WRONG.

How



How to make a PEN.

THE Manufactured Quills, before spoken of, have no need of *scraping* to make them *slit* clear, as *raw* Quills have; and they are apt to *split* too high, unless prevented by placing your *Thumb* at the *Height* you would have the *Slit* to *stop*. The *Cheeks* are not to be made *strong* in a *weak* Quill, nor *weak* in a *strong* one; tho' the main *Judgment* lies in the *slitting* and *nibbing*. If the Quill is *weak*, the *Slit* must be the *shorter*; if *strong*, it matters not how *long*, the *Cheeks* being made in *proportion*: So that if *used* by an *obedient Hand*, it hath a *Spring*, and *opens* and *shuts* at *pleasure*, as is evident in *Striking*, or *Command of Hand*. In order to make a good PEN, Care must be taken that the *Slit* is not *forced* so *hard* as to *gape* or *open*; neither should the *Nib* be bent inwards; both these *Failings* tending to the same *bad End*: The *first* causes the Pen not to *cast* the *Ink*; the other, after very little *Use*, occasions a double *Stroke*; and when the *Nib* is recovered from that *forced Strain*, the *Slit* opens not much *unlike* that which was *forced too much*. The *Slit* should be always *easy* and *clear*, so that when *nibbed* as I shall *show*,
you

you may *write* with the *Ease* and *Freedom* of a
MASTER of WRITING.

Your PEN being made all but *nibbing*, and indeed there is the great *Error* that most *Persons* are *guilty* of, but more especially WRITING-MASTERS, who go upon a *Maxim* laid down by some of the Profession who were in *Esteem* thirty Years ago. If I differ from them in this Particular, I hope to *demonstrate* that I have *Reason* to be of another *Opinion*, and I *doubt not* but I shall *succeed*.

I shall *instance*, in giving you my *Way* of making the PEN to *write* the *Round Hands*; which is,

MAKE each *Cheek*, or *Side* of the *Slit*, as equal as possible, having a *strait-bladed Knife*: *Nib* it quite even, or *square*; your *Slit* being long or short, according to the *Strength* of your *Quill*, and the ordinary *Pressure* you use in *Writing*.

Tho' this may be contrary to the *Methods* commonly *practised*, if I have the *Success* to point out the *Errors* any other way of *nibbing* the Pen is liable to, then I shall have little to do to speak in behalf of the above Method of *nibbing* the Pen; which Pen when so *nibbed*, and the *Position* of the *Body*, as before laid down, is duly observed, *Writing* will find an *easier* and *better* *Success* to those who now think it a *Burthen* and a *Fatigue* to *write*.

The common *Practice* of *nibbing* the PEN is, that the *Part* next your *Hand* be something the *narrowest* and *shortest*. Should the
Nib

Nib in that Part be the *narrowest*, it must of course be the *weakest*: If the *shortest*, the other Part of the *Nib* must touch the *Paper* before it, and then you may as well have no *Slit* at all; but I suppose by *shortest* is meant, that it is on a sort of *Slant* from the other Part of the *Nib*; and this indeed cannot be avoided any other way than by *carefully* holding the *Pen-knife* with the Point of the *Blade* on a *Line* with the *Handle*; for when it seems to *point* from you, the off Part of the *Nib* is upon a *Slant* from the *inner*; so that as the *PEN* is *reversed* when you *write*, the *Slant* Part of the *Nib* lies next your *Hand*: The *inner* Part of the *Nib* being *longest*, causes a sort of *Nub* at the Turn of the *Letter*, a *Swelling* or a *Jetting* out, because that Part of the *Nib* next your *Hand* being on a *Slant*, the other *first* touches the *Paper*, and consequently leaves a *Mark* at the Outside of the *Turn*, when the *inner* Part of the *Nib* has performed the leading *Stroke*. If the *Hand* is not *obedient*, the long Part of the *Nib* follows the *short*, and then the leading *Stroke* appears *thick* and *clumsy*, and as it were *sandy* and *speckled*. This has been the Fault of many a *correct Writer*.

Should you *nib* your *PEN* to write the *Round Hand* with the Part of the *Nib* next your *Hand* the *longest*, it has its *Difficulty*, for there will certainly be a *Break* at the same Part of the *Turn* where I have described the *Nub* to be, which is occasioned by turning your

your *Hand*, or leaving off to perform the *leading Stroke*; the outward *Part* of the *Nib* being *longest*, if not somewhat *eased*, would cause a *Splashing* of the *Ink*. The *inner Part* of the *Nib* being the *shortest*, must leave the *Paper* the *soonest*; when the *longest*, the *Difficulty* hath been observed already. The outmost *Part* of the *Nib*, by being *longest*, may make the *leading Stroke* fine; but then it will appear like a *Scratch*; that *Part* of the *Nib* soon worn out, and then become *spungy*.

If these *Objections* are *true*, there is no *Writer* whatever that sees these *Errors* in a *Piece* of *Writing*, but must *allow* them. Then there can be but *one* other *Way*, which must be by *nibbing* the *PEN* square; for, if the *off Part* of the *Nib*, or the *near*, is either *longer* or *shorter*, 'twill subject *Writing* to the *Difficulties* I have mentioned.

I have *nothing* to say to *nibbing* the *Pen* square further than that, as no other *Method* will answer the *Purpose* of *Writing* without obstructing *free Writing*, *nibbing* the *PEN* square must be the only *true Method*.

In order to write the *Running Hand*, or the *Hand* for *Business*, the *Method* of *nibbing* is the *same*, as to being *even*, but not so *square*, and the *Cheeks* something stronger than in the *Round Hands*, and not so much *slant* taken off, —letting the *Back* of the *Knife* incline towards you, which causes the *Nib* to be of a *hollow Round*, and in your *Writing* causes a sort of *half-full* at the *Tails* or *free Turns*, which in-

deed may be more visible by striking after the Dutch Command, and ornamenting German-Text Letters, — this sort of PEN being very proper for those Purposes.

To write the *Law Hands*, which (by the way) are very few, and very little practised since the Act of Parliament for rendering all Proceedings in English hath took Place; the PEN, however, to write those Hands, is nibbed stronger than the way above laid down; shorter in the Slit, and being held almost upright, the inner Part of the Nib rather slanting from the off, inclining towards your Body, cuts your Fulls square, and makes your back Strokes without any manner of Assistance whatever.

Thus, in this small DISCOURSE, I have laid down what I think are the very and only Inconveniencies that hinder a willing Person from writing a free, legible and correct Hand; — ERRORS that were implanted by their first Instructors, — so, of course, harder to be removed from them; but I am sensible there are many Persons who would willingly extricate themselves from the Difficulties they labour under, which, as it were, compel them to write in a stiff, awkward Manner. Others there are who are so attached to Error, that their Pride in remaining so is not worth the Observation of any one who writes for publick Good. And therefore I offer this Discourse to the Consideration of those impartial Persons who are willing to TRY if what I have advanced be true and practicable.

Should

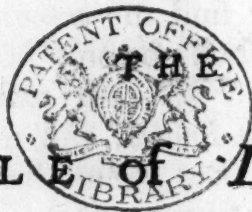
Should any one find me *erroneous* in any of my *Assertions*, I shall not only *acknowledge* my *Conviction* to the *World*, but *thankfully esteem* that Person as my *Friend*, and not only *mine*, but my *Reader's*. But I must beg leave to *observe*, that it is not every one that *says*, I have *advanced* wrong *Things*; but he is to be believed who can give more *rational Reasons* to the *contrary* of my *Assertions*, than I have in *Vindication* of them, of which every *considerate MAN* is a *competent Judge*.

End of the Discourse.

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R U L E of L I F E.

A Man's Actions determine his Fortune.
Be slow in resolving, and quick in executing.

Consideration secures us from Repentance.
Do willingly that which cannot be avoided.
Every Action should have its proper End,
Fear to do what begets Fear when done.
Grace below conducts unto Glory above.
Hope is the true Cordial of human Life.
Innocence is better than the strongest Armour.
Keep Peace, if you would enjoy Plenty.
Live so as not to be surprised by Death.
Memory is a Blessing attended by Judgment.
Necessity is too often the Mother of Shame.
Obey punctually, if you would obtain Command.
Patience, tho' it be a slow Remedy, is sure.
Quiet is a much surer Possession than Fame.
Receive thankfully what Providence bestows.
Silence is the best Prologue to wise Speech.
Time and Truth will compass all good Ends.
Virtue in Adversity will command Applause.
Unity is a better Guard than military Force.
Wealth is a Blessing that depends on Use.
Xantippe's Humour taught *Socrates* Patience.
Youth is Man's hot Fit, Age his cold one.
Zeal, like Fire, must be kept in Subjection.

DEFINITIONS.

A Lacrity is Obedience in good Humour.
 Beneficence is the Imitation of Divinity.
 Clemency is Justice without Rage.
 Despair flows from Fear without Bounds.
 Experience is the Treasure of Examples.
 Fame is the Report of virtuous Actions.
 Gratitude is an active Memory.
 Happiness is but the Effect of Content.
 Integrity arises from the Love of Good.
 Knowledge is the Wealth of the Mind.
 Learning is the Spoil of other Men's Labours.
 Melancholy is considerate Grief.
 Necessity may be felt, but not understood.
 Opinion is what Man takes for Truth.
 Patience is right Reason in Suffering.
 Quality is tried by Virtue's Touchstone.
 Reason is a Ray of the Divinity.
 Stupidity is the Palsy of the Mind.
 Tranquillity arises from the Sense of Safety.
 Vigilance is a waking Attention.
 Uneasiness is the Fever of the Mind.
 Wisdom is the Application of Knowledge.
Xenophon's Wit recorded his Valour.
 Youth's Follies speak the Temper of the Man.
Zeno was the first of the Stoic Philosophers.

Of the POINTS, or STOPS, and other MARKS used in Writing, and Reading; with their Characters, Places, and Signification.

DUE Pointing is very necessary in Writing, to prevent Confusion, and assist the Reader, both as to a right Pronunciation, by the raising and falling of the Voice; and also to the more easy and distinct Apprehension of the Sense, and is of no less Use to others, who shall hear us read, or see our Writing.

The four principal Points or Stops appertaining to a Sentence are,

1. A Comma, which is mark'd thus (,)
2. A Semicolon thus (;)
3. A Colon thus (:)
4. A Period, or full Stop, at the End of a Sentence thus (.)

[,] Example of the Comma.

It is not the bare Act, but the Intention of it, that makes it virtuous or vicious.

At each of the Comma's in the above-mention'd Sentence, you are to stop whilst you may leisurely tell one.

[;] Example of the Semicolon.

In the Scripture, the Ignorant may learn all useful Knowledge; and the Knowing may learn to discern their own Ignorance.

In this Sentence you are to stop at the Semicolon at the Word *Knowledge*, whilst you may count two.

[:] Example of the Colon.

It may be a less Evil to commit Sin, and not love it, than to love Sin, and not so frequently to commit it: The former argues Weakness of Grace; but the other the Corruption of Nature.

At the Colon in this last Sentence after the Word *it*, you are to stop, whilst you may count three.

[.] Example of the Period, or full Stop.

Ignorance makes a Man conceited; and Conceitedness makes him the Jest of Society.

Here, at the Point after *Society*, you are to stop, till you can count four, before you read any farther.

An Example of these four Stops or Points we have, *Psalms cxli. 5. Let the Righteous smite me, it shall be a Kindness; and let him reprove me, it shall be an excellent Oil, which shall not break my Head: For yet my Prayer also shall be in their Calamities.*

How strangely would this Text appear, if any one should write it thus ——— *Let the Righteous smite me it, shall be a Kindness and let; him reprove me it shall, &c.*

A Note

A Note of Exclamation or Admiration, is mark'd thus (!)

Example. *Oh the Depth of the Riches!*

A Parenthesis, which includes some additional or explanatory Words in a Sentence, is made thus ()

Example. *For I know in me (that is, in my Flesh) dwelleth no Good.* But this among the best Authors is now as much as possible avoided.

When a Question is asked, you are to make a crooked Mark over the Period thus (?) which is called a Note of Interrogation.

Example. *Who would be desirous of Riches, did he but consider the Evils which attend them?*

(') Apostrophe, is a Comma at the Head of Letters, signifying some Letter or Letters left out for quicker Pronunciation; as *I'll* for *I will*, *would'st* for *wouldest*, *sha'n't* for *shall not*, *ne'er* for *never*, *is't* for *is it*, *'tis* for *it is*, *i'th'* for *in the*, *o'er* for *over*. It is also used to denote a Genitive Case, as my *Father's* Land, my *Wife's* Son; for *Land of my Father*, *Son of my Wife*.

(..) Diëresis, is a Mark made to denote the Parting of two Vowels, which otherwise might seem to make a Diphthong, and is set over the latter Vowel, as in the very Word *Diëresis*, *Gileäd*, &c. of which we have occasionally spoken before.

(-) Hyphen, a Note either of joining the Syllables of the same Word, when one or more of them happen to be writ in one Line, and the rest, for want of Room, in another: Or else divides the several integral Parts of a compounded Word, as *Hand-granadoes*, *Fire-shovel*. In which Kind of Composition our Language is second to none; no not to the copious *Greek* itself.

Eclipsis, is a Piece of a Line drawn to denote that some Part of a Verse or Sentence cited is left out, either at the Beginning or End; as,

'Tis still the Miser's Lot;

The Young Fool spends all that the Old Knave got.

(") Quotation, or double Comma reverse, is used at the Beginning of the Line, and shews what is quoted from an Author to be in his own Words.

(¶) Paragraph, denotes a Division comprehending several Sentences under one Head, and is used in subdividing a Chapter or Book into lesser Parts or Portions.

(☞) Index, is a Note like a Hand, with the Fore-Finger pointing out at something that is remarkable.

(+) Obelisk, is a Mark of Reference to the Margin.

(§) Section, denotes the Beginning of a new Head or Discourse.

(') Accent,

([˘]) Accent, is placed over a Vowel to denote that the Stress or Sound in Pronunciation is on that Syllable.

([˘]) Breve, over a Vowel, shews it must be sounded short, quick, and brisk.

(^ˆ) Circumflex, is of the same Shape with the Caret, but is placed over some Vowel to shew the Syllable to be long, as *Euphrâtes*.

([^]) To the above add that which is called Caret, that is to say in *English*, it is wanting, mark'd as a *Latin* Circumflex, which is to shew where a Word forgotten in the Hurry of Writing, and placed above the Line, is to come in.

And so much for Pointing; which, carefully observed, will add Grace and Credit to your Writing.

Short Lines for TEXT-HAND.

A Bandon whatsoever's ill.
Be wise betimes.
Care destroys the Body.
Do the Things that are just.
Expect to receive as you give.
Frequent good Company.
Give what you give chearfully.
Have good Men in Esteem.
Imitate that which is good.
Keep God's Commandments.
Learn to be wise.
Money answers all Things.
Nothing get, nothing have.
Observe Modesty.
Pleasures are very short.
Pains are very long.

Quit all Revenge.
Quiet your Passions.
Recompence a good Turn.
Repent of your Sins.
Spare for to live.
Sin not wilfully.
Time will improve.
Turn from your Sins.
Use moderate Pleasure.
Use not bad Company.
Vain are most Pleasures.
Vile are the Vulgar.
Wisdom is the principal Thing.
Wise Men are scarce.
Xenophon and *Xenocrates*.
Zeno and *Zenobia*.

F I N I S.



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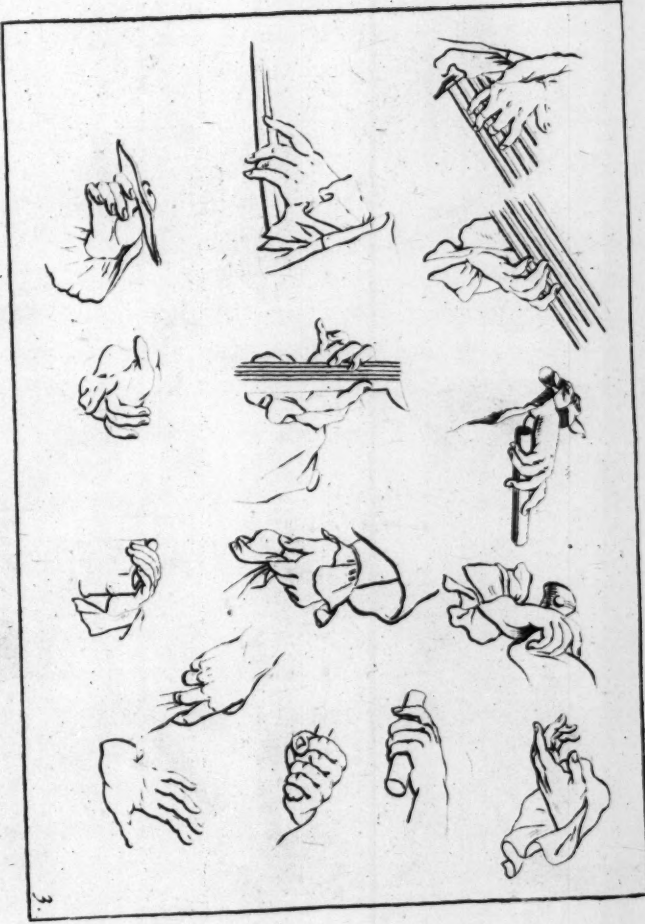




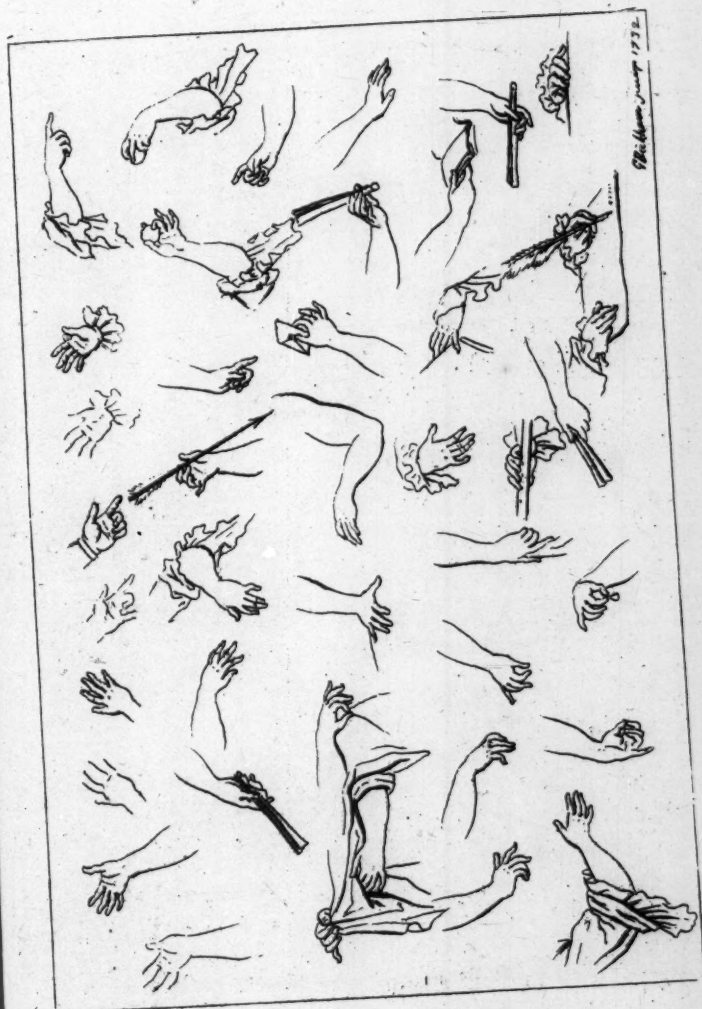








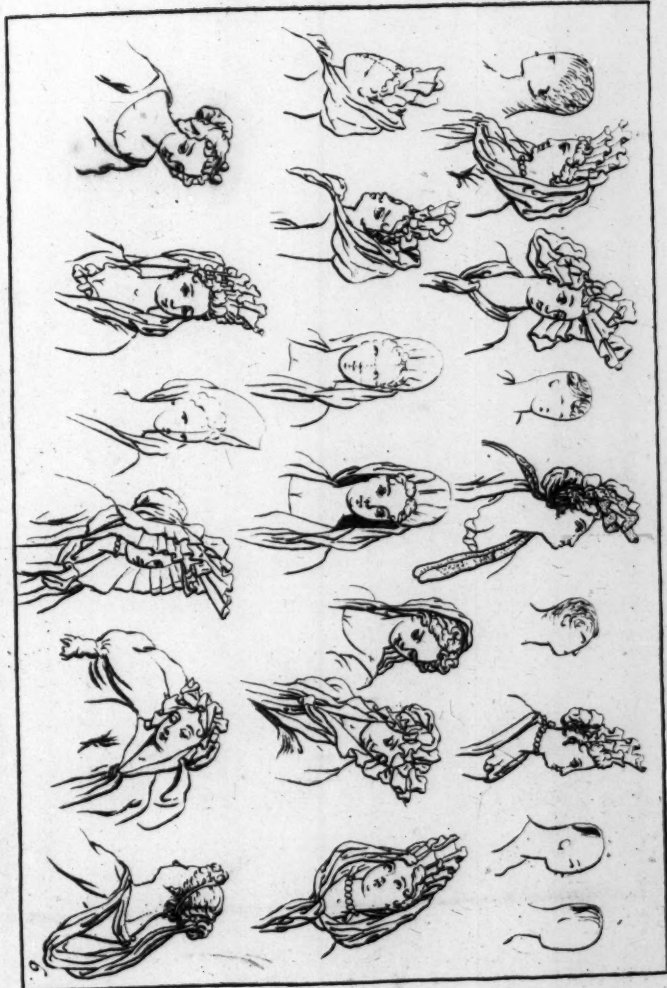
























B. C. C. C. C.







